

Minutes Parks and Recreation Board January 21, 2009

**Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Board meeting held on January 21, 2009 7:00 p.m.,
Library Board Room, 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona.**

Members Present:

Frank Granillo, Chair
Angela Thornton, Vice-Chair
Chuy Carreon
Scott Hamilton
Ed Parker
Ed Roberts
Don Watkins

Members Absent:

None

City Staff Present:

Travis Dray, Deputy Manager – Parks & Recreation Department
Cynthia Yanez, Executive Assistant – Parks & Recreation Department

Invited Guest:

Mayor Hugh Hallman

Meeting convened at 7:01 p.m.

Frank Granillo called the meeting to order.

Agenda Item 1 – Consideration of Meeting Minutes:

The amended minutes of the November 19, 2008 meeting were accepted as written.

Agenda Item 2 – Presentation by Mayor Hugh Hallman

Frank Granillo, Chair, introduced and welcomed Mayor Hugh Hallman.

1. Mayor Hallman has been working to meet with all of the boards and commissions.
2. With the approval of the recent bond election, and with the addition of other resources, the Parks and Recreation Board will be at the center of the park renovation process along with other City of Tempe priorities.

3. The Parks and Recreation Board already helped to determine the order in which parks will be rehabilitated and now can help the neighborhoods have a voice in the process of rehabilitating our neighborhood parks.
4. They will also have to sort through the process to ensure that the items that are identified by the neighborhoods are realistic and push those ideas forward.
5. The board also needs to look for ways to make improvements to the parks that will reduce the amount of maintenance needed while increasing the longevity of the parks.
6. The bonds for the park renovations are funded by a secondary property tax.
7. The Parks and Recreation Board has the opportunity to play a significant role in the planning of a centennial project for Papago Park.
8. An ad hoc committee has been formed to act as a facilitator for various, interested stakeholders.
9. The Papago Park project will not take any resources from the park renovation program.
10. Those involved in the Papago Park master planning process include, but are not limited to, City of Tempe, City of Phoenix, City of Scottsdale, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Museum Advisory Board, Papago Salado Association, Tempe Historic Preservation Commission and the neighborhoods surrounding the park.
11. At the January 22 Formal Council Meeting, a contract likely will be awarded for the master planning process.
12. Resources for the project will come from the private sector.
13. Properties of interest within Tempe's portion of Papago Park include: Eisendrath House, O'Connor House, Arizona Historical Society, and the Loma del Rio ruins.
14. A Tempe Cares project consisted of installing 500 plants and trees in Papago Park.
15. The Rio Salado Foundation is fundraising to revegetate Tempe's portion of Papago Park.
16. The SRP-MIC has awarded a grant for this endeavor as well as many other projects throughout the City.
17. The Mayor has been working with homebuilders to donate trees from their unused nursery stocks, while the Rio Salado Foundation has paid for the moving costs.
18. Tempe's portion of the Papago Park project will be \$20 million, while the overall project will be about \$60 million.
19. The Rio Salado Foundation has been working to raise funds not only for the Papago Park project but also for the Boathouse, the Park Between the Bridges project and the Veterans Memorial.
20. The Rio Salado Foundation is a separate 501(c)(3) program, outside of the City's jurisdiction.
21. The Rio Salado Commission has outlived its usefulness and the Mayor would like the commission to be absorbed by the Parks and Recreation Board.
22. Additionally, Mayor Hallman would like the Golf Committee absorbed by the Parks Board as their scope of work is too narrow and there is significant overlap.
23. There are currently 23 active members between the three (3) boards, which could quickly be narrowed down to a manageable number through attrition.
24. By merging the Golf Committee and the Rio Salado Commission into the Parks Board, it will eliminate duplication of services and make better, and effective, use of staffs' time and volunteers' time.
25. The Parks and Recreation Board felt that 11 members would be a manageable number to serve on the board.
26. The number of applications for boards and commissions has decreased.

27. The City should use the volunteers' time wisely and effectively.
28. The merger could result in getting a broader interest from the board members.
29. The office of Rio Salado is going to go away and some of it will roll up into the Community Development Department.
30. The 125-acre BLM property continues to get interest from outside groups that would like to use the land for youth fields and facilities.
31. However, the land might be better used if it is sold and the money is used to acquire land in a different location that can be used for this type of recreational use.
32. There are also other opportunities for land swaps or sales.
33. The Rolling Hills Golf Course, which is in a beautiful location, could serve as a new home for ASU's Karsten's Golf Course. ASU could then renovate the sanitarium into a conference center. The land from Karsten's could be used for youth athletic fields and a research park for ASU.
34. If they did move their research park to ASU, then maybe some of the land at their current location could be used for additional fields or park space.
35. There are a lot of opportunities available for negotiations and redevelopment of current properties and the BLM property can help get us to where we want to go.
36. Tempe is still in a position to not lay off a single employee, while delivering the same, or better, service to our residents.
37. The City has been able to double its reserves by projecting a 4% sustainable growth of revenue and using the extra revenue to make one-time purchases or to add to its reserves.
38. That money will now help to smooth out the budget during the economic downturn.
39. While there has been downturn in some of the commercial areas of the City, the public doesn't see us closing any libraries or swimming pools.
40. There are some projects in downtown Tempe that have come to a halt due to the collapse of Mortgages Limited, including the two residential towers in downtown, but this project likely will see a successful completion.
41. Angela Thornton thanked the Mayor for coming and asked about the ratio of women to men on the boards.
42. Women currently serving on the commissions mentioned earlier, the Parks and Recreation Board currently has one (1), The Golf Committee has zero (0), but the Rio Salado Commission has eight (8).
43. Angela also asked Mayor Hallman about the Parks and Recreation Board's role as an advisory committee.
44. The Mayor said that all of the boards and commissions are to "Act in advisory capacity..." and to establish their own rules.
45. He asked the board to consider the designation of the Loma del Rio Ruins, the LoPiano Bosque, the O'Connor House, the Eisendrath House and certain other areas of Papago Park as preserves.
46. He reminded the board that nothing prevents them from holding public meetings to gather input from the public and that should help to facilitate community input.

Agenda Item 3 – Chair/Board Member Comments

Chuy Carreon asked if the City would consider to create a "Bird Island" in the center of Kiwanis Lake so that the ducks do not sleep around the edge of the lake and leave droppings everywhere.

Ed Roberts says he played both Rolling Hills and Ken McDonald and he was pleased to announce that the “greens are breaking and rolling fast.”

Scott Hamilton recently played the Frisbee golf course in Papago Park.

Travis Dray informed the board that the next agenda will include the Svob Park master plan, updates from Rio Salado and Spring Training.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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